

dom. He would answer these assertions, how? His catechism does not help him. His parents would be horrified by his doubts, or simply answer: "Believe." The American spirit is a questioning spirit. "Why" is perpetually on its lips.

He knows the letter of his faith, nothing more. Ten minutes in the confessional at long intervals, a hasty question or two, answered with "Believe," do not satisfy him.

He has read much on eternal punishment in the newspapers. His favorite sheet has declared it to be unreasonable. A scientist (God save the mark) has gravely stated his disbelief in the resurrection of the body because goats have been seen to eat grass that grew on dead men's graves! Our young man begins to accept the teaching of the Church with "scientific" reservation. He does not read a Catholic journal; he has no time to read a Catholic book. Both, journals and books, are too "preachy", too long-winded; besides, Catholic writers are always one-sided, they have not "scientific" minds. And so the poor youth loses his faith and his reason in the pandemoniacal jargon of "scientific" nonsense.

"Force" and "correlation" and "primordial germs," the talismanic word "protoplasm," heat, "the motor of the universe," float about in common conversation whenever religion is discussed. The ability to cover a paucity of ideas with this superficial veneer is considered to be education, and the young man who can use these terms with the most fluency is the best educated. In every American city or town there are thousands of young men—the sons of Catholic parents—whose education at home and at school has been so slight that they are obliged to depend on the newspapers to finish it. A young man coming out of a public school has a double chance of falling a prey to this "scientific" jaundice.

And it must be admitted with regret that even schools under the supervision of Catholics do not always supply the antidote. It is not pleasant or grateful to find fault; optimism is a soothing state for both writer and reader. But when we see a large number of intelligent and sensible young men neglectful of their religious duties, that shockingly inconsistent in their opinions, and ready to yield up every vestige of their faith whenever it is attacked in the name of "science," it is necessary to inquire into the cause, and the result cannot be concealed in deference to that foolish and optimistic spirit which cries peace when there is no peace.

Few of our young men can afford to go to college. They get what they can at school, and very early take their places in life, shoulder to shoulder with the college-bred man. They breathe the same social atmosphere that he breathes, without the means necessary to save them. The gravest danger to faith in this country is not the onslaughts of the flesh, but the onslaughts that are more subtly made on the intellect. A young man, firm in his faith, may fall and repent, but he who admits the plausible demon, doubt, into his mind, and feeds himself with the fallacies of the time, rarely repents. The gulf between what he conceives to be religion and what he conceives to be science widens as he grows older, the more he reads.—Hence the only remedy the *ADVOCATE* would suggest is to make all education more Christian.

It is a queer thing that some men cannot consider themselves truly religious without making other people uncomfortable.

Speechmakers are reminded that even the perfumer who makes an extract gives credit to the flower from which he gets it.

*Truth.*